



What To Do If the Baby Cries

Babies cry for many reasons. Sometimes it seems that they cry for no reason. To learn what might be wrong, see if you can identify the type of sound the baby is making. There are a number of things that you can try. If you are caring for a baby who is not your own, ask the baby's parent to tell you about the different ways the baby cries and what might quiet the baby. Here are some hints:

- **Hunger** – This may be a low-pitched and rhythmic cry. It sounds demanding rather than desperate and the baby may suck his or her fingers or try to nurse before crying.
- **Boredom** – The baby sounds whiny. The crying stops as soon as you pick up the baby.
- **Tiredness** – This might be a wailing cry that gradually gets louder.
- **Pain** – The cry starts suddenly and is loud and long. The baby's arms and legs may move wildly. This cry is non-stop and uncontrollable.
- **Sickness** – The baby's cry sounds weak, whiny and nasal. There may be other signals that the baby is sick, such as a flushed face, refusal to eat or diarrhea.
- **Colic** – Colic is uncontrollable crying that can be identified because it occurs like clockwork every afternoon or evening and the baby can't be soothed. Colic is hard to manage, but the baby will probably grow out of it by the age of four months.
- **Irritability** – Some babies just cry a lot. Soothing techniques will work better with these babies than with colicky babies.



What to do. . .

- **Carrying** – Hold the baby close in your arms or an infant carrier and carry him or her around for awhile.
- **Rocking** – Many babies like rhythmic, rocking motion. Rocking chairs, infant swings, carriage rides, car rides or even quietly dancing may soothe the baby.
- **Wrapping** – Some babies like to be swaddled – wrapped snugly in a lightweight blanket. This works best for a very young baby.
- **Soothing sound** – Babies like the sound of your voice singing or speaking softly. They may also like low rhythmic sounds like the hum of the washer or fan or even a vacuum cleaner.
- **Comfort sucking** – Babies may have a sucking urge, even when they are not hungry. For a baby under six months, a pacifier may be a help in getting the baby to settle down.
- **Cry it out** – Sometimes babies just need to cry out their feelings of fatigue or tension at sleep time. If the baby seems tired and soothing techniques don't work, try putting the baby in the crib and letting him or her cry for a brief spell.

The baby's crying may make you feel irritated and angry. If you feel this way, put the baby in the crib and walk away until you feel calmer. Put on some music or call someone to help, but

NEVER, EVER SHAKE THE BABY!!!